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**Comparison between South Korean and Finnish education: curricula and oral tasks in
textbooks in English education for high schools**

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Master's Thesis

English Studies

Faculty of Arts

University of Helsinki

May 2020



Tiedekunta – Fakultet – Faculty Faculty of Arts		Koulutusohjelma – Utbildningsprogram – Degree Programme Master’s program in English studies	
Opintosuunta – Studieriktning – Study Track English Studies,			
Tekijä – Författare – Author Yealim Kim			
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title Comparison between South Korean and Finnish education: curricula and oral tasks in textbooks in English education for high schools			
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level Master’s thesis	Aika – Datum – Month and year 5/2020	Sivumäärä– Sidoantal – Number of pages 46+1 appendix	
Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>English has become a global language, and students around the world know English is an essential foreign language to expand their knowledge. For the same reason, English has been the most common foreign language that students learn in South Korea and Finland.</p> <p>The purpose of this master’s thesis is to examine the curricula in South Korea and Finland to see the similarities and differences of the two countries’ English education. Although both countries focus on teaching English by using the communicative approach, their outputs in English education differ from each other. The study analyzes the curricula and textbooks by using Curriculum-Analysis Procedure. Then, the study analyzes the textbooks based on Littlejohn’s task analysis sheet.</p> <p>According to the analysis, the Finnish curriculum provides more specific learning goals than the Korean curriculum even though the Finnish curriculum does not specify teaching methods to teachers. The Korean curriculum provides specific word limitations for each level, and it provides specific teaching methods. However, the Korean curriculum’s learning goals are rather vague.</p> <p>The analysis on the textbooks suggests an interesting result. Although the Korean textbooks provide a higher number of oral tasks than the Finnish textbooks, the results demonstrate that the Korean textbooks are focused on repetition. Also, the Korean textbooks are quite regulated since the tasks ask students to focus on certain task types. On the contrary, the Finnish textbooks include a smaller number of oral tasks than the Korean textbooks, but the oral tasks encourage students to produce their own sentences rather than focusing on form. The Finnish textbooks try to provide as diverse task types as possible.</p>			
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords Communicative approach, English education, curriculum, oral tasks, teaching, communicative language teaching, textbook			
Säilytyspaikka – Förvaringställe – Where deposited			
Muita tietoja – Övriga uppgifter – Additional information			

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1. Introduction

As a global language, English is taught as a mandatory foreign language in many countries. Researchers have found different methods, and approaches for teaching English in effective ways. The development of English teaching has affected English curricula around the world.

The changes of English teaching have affected the English curricula in South Korea, and Finland. Their curricula have changed significantly due to the development of language teaching methods, and approaches. As both countries acknowledge the importance of learning English, South Korea and Finland have gone through several attempts to revise their English curricula, allowing students to meet the current social needs, and acquire fluency in English.

Although it seems that Finland and South Korea do not have any significant connections, both countries have some features in common, and it would be meaningful to demonstrate comparison of both countries' English curricula. Since both countries are a Ural-Altaic family of languages, which do not share anything in common with English, Korea and Finland do not benefit from their mother tongue languages to learn English. Also, both countries are EFL (English as a Foreign Language) countries, so neither speaks English as their national language. As South Korea and Finland are known for their successful education systems, both countries have achieved high scores in PISA (The Program for International Student Assessment 2015). English is the dominant foreign language in both countries and the importance of communicativeness is indisputable, thus both curricula focus on a communicative approach. Thus, comparing the two countries' English curricula would give some insights on how the two EFL countries differ from each other in a communicative perspective, while aiming for the same teaching approach.

English is the dominant foreign language in Finland, and it is the most popular foreign language in the country (Leppänen & Nikula 2008). From 2020, the Finnish National Agency for Education announced that students will start to learn English from the first-grade level. (Finnish National Agency for Education). From 1 to 9th grade, students in Finland learn English as their A syllabus, and students have the right to choose English as

their foreign language. Students keep learning English in high school, and students have rights to choose other foreign languages if they wish to learn them.

In South Korea, English is one of the mandatory subjects and students are obliged to study English until they graduate from high school. According to Kim (2016), Korean students spend about 20,000 hours studying English until they graduate from universities. Kim (2016) also mentioned that Koreans still study English after graduation to get a job or to get a promotion from their companies. According to Jung (2013), job applicants in South Korea usually have to submit their TOEIC (Test Of English for International Communication) or TOEFL (The Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores to meet companies' requirements.

Even though the two countries put communicativeness as a priority in their curricula, students' speaking skills in the two countries have a huge gap. According to TOEFL (2017), average Koreans achieve 83/120 and their speaking part is the weakest (speaking grade average 20) while average Finnish achieve 95/120 and their speaking part is their second highest among other parts (speaking grade average 24). According to English First (2018), Finland ranked 8th in English proficiency level while South Korea is in the 31st among 88 countries and regions.

In Korean high schools, students focus on learning how to comprehend given texts and analyze grammatical rules in the texts. According to Cho (2010), Korean teachers do not use English during the class, and about 60% of teachers answered that they are not used to teaching English in English.

Rikabi (2016) suggested that the Finnish national core curriculum puts more and more emphasis on communication for the upper secondary education. From 1991, Finnish educators implemented TEE (Teaching English in English). From 2004, the Finnish national core curriculum made separate objectives for learning outcomes of English and they set higher goals for proficiency levels (NCC 2014, p. 348).

While both countries focus on communicativeness in their English curricula, Finland achieved significantly higher proficiency level in English than South Korea. To understand the differences between the two curricula and how communicativeness in the curricula differ from each other, the thesis aims to compare the two English curricula in their communicativeness to suggest the differences of English education between South

Korea and Finland. This study cannot identify direct reasons why their results are different because it only examines the differences between the Korean and Finnish curricula in English education and their textbooks. However, the study suggests some possible relationships between the textbooks and curriculum's communicativeness.

To understand the differences of English education between South Korea and Finland, comparing the two curricula seemed important to understand how English is taught in each country. In this study, oral tasks are analyzed for two reasons. First, according to TOEFL results, students in both countries have similar results in writing, reading, and listening skills, but only the speaking parts demonstrated the differences in their English skills. Second, the study also focuses on the oral tasks to see how the textbooks applied communicativeness in English education as the two curricula describe that they are focused on communicativeness in English education. The study will compare the two countries' English curricula and compare the oral tasks in the high school textbooks of the two countries. The aim of this study is to identify the differences and similarities between the Korean and Finnish English curricula in communicativeness. As curriculum is closely related to the textbooks which are the main teaching materials in South Korea and Finland, an analysis on oral tasks are included to understand how the communicativeness is applied in the textbooks.

The goal of the study is to answer the research questions:

1. What are the differences and similarities in the EFL curricula of South Korea and Finland?
2. How do oral tasks in the English textbooks from South Korea and Finland differ in perspective of CLT?

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The aim of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is to develop students' competence to communicate outside of the classroom as well as to produce sentences accurately in a lesson (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). CLT refers to communicative competence which is related to learners' underlying knowledge of the language and the ability to

communicate in the language (Canale 1983, p. 5), and CLT includes at least four dimensions to a speaker's communicative competence in a language: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence. The communicative approach puts the importance for these dimensions equally. According to Canale & Swain (1980), non-verbal symbols, written language, production and comprehension are also included as parts of communication.

The communicative approach gained prominence in the 1980s and it focuses on the skills to use the target language in authentic communication situations rather than relying on the drills and grammar teaching (Canale 1983, p. 15). According to Littlewood (2014), the focus of the communicative approach is what the pupils should learn rather than how pupils should learn. Canale & Swain (1980) proposed learners should also learn the culture of the target language and CLT is not a syllabus constructed solely on communicative tasks (Inha, 2018). CLT is difficult to give a definition as it is a unified but laden with theoretically well-informed set of tenets about language learning and teaching (Brown 2007).

As a description of CLT, Brown (2007, p. 46) offers seven characteristics of CLT Approach:

1. CLT suggests a focus on all of the components of communicative competence. ☺
2. Language techniques focus on teaching language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not central focus but remain as important components of language.☺
3. Fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.☺
4. Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom.☺
5. Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through raising their awareness of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for production and comprehension.☺
6. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing font of knowledge. ☺
7. Students are active participants in their own learning process.☺

Table 1. Seven complementary characteristics of CLT (Brown, 2007, p. 46)

CLT focuses on using lots of authentic language as we attempt to build fluency (Brown, 2007). In CLT, students actively participate in their own learning process, and the role of the teacher is to facilitate students to learn without controlling students. In CLT, spontaneity is present in the classrooms as students are encouraged to deal with real-life situations under the teacher's guidance (Brown, 2007, p. 47).

Language learning is learning to communicate, and learners are encouraged to communicate from the very beginning of learning a language (Finocchiaro & Brumfit 1988, pp. 91-93) in CLT. Learning process involves trial and error (Richards & Rogers 2001, p. 172), and the main goal of CLT is to interact with other people. As a facilitator, the teacher in the classroom is a guide to encourage students to construct meaningful interaction with others (Brown, 2007). CLT puts less importance to the overt explanation and discussion of grammatical rules than traditionally practiced (Brown, 2007). Chambers (1997) mentioned that using a vast amount of authentic language is implied in CLT to build fluency.

2.2 The English curricula in South Korea and Finland

English curriculum plays an important role in English education, and it is closely related to the English textbooks. English curriculum provides a framework and guidelines for teaching English. English textbooks refer to English curriculum to make practical language teaching materials. Both countries follow a national curriculum to teach English in upper secondary schools, and both countries use textbooks as their main teaching materials.

By comparing the two curricula, differences and similarities of the two curricula will be described. South Korea provides a separate English subject curriculum while Finland provides an integrated curriculum for all subjects for general upper secondary schools. English is a subcategory of foreign languages section, and it is described as one of foreign language courses in Finland. According to Namgung (2016), the Finnish national core curriculum does not put the limitation for vocabulary while the English curriculum of South Korea specifies the number of words that can be included in a textbook at a certain level.

South Korea and Finland emphasize that English should be taught as a language which enables students to communicate as global citizens. English is a mandatory foreign

subject, and students can choose optional English courses if they want to. The two curricula aim CLT as the main teaching approach, and communication is the main goal of teaching English.

2.2.1 The English policies in South Korea

South Korea has revised the English curriculum 11 times from 1946 until 2020. After regaining independence from Japan, South Korea made a course of study as a prototype for the curriculum (1946-1955). English writing, reading, speaking and spelling courses were taught separately, and the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) was the main teaching method (Lee, 2015).

According to Lee (2015), the 1st-2nd English curriculum period was based on structuralism and audiolingual method. The first national curriculum (1955-1963) was published after North Korea and South Korea agreed to a truce. Students were encouraged to learn through repetition, and communicative competence was not important in this period. Lee (2015) emphasized that the 2nd English curriculum (1963-1973) shifted its aim to communicative competence and experience-centered education and students were encouraged to study English to communicate.

Until the 5th English curriculum, English education in South Korea was based on structuralism and teaching grammar was the main objectives in the classrooms. Lee (2015) mentioned that the third period (1973-1981) emphasized the importance of learning-centered education and the curriculum suggested not to use GTM, but the curriculum mainly suggested to teach grammatical rules. In practice, teaching was still based on GTM. In the fourth period (1981-1987), the importance of communicativeness was emphasized in the curriculum. The fifth English curriculum (1987-1992) advanced Notional-Functional syllabus and fluency took on more importance than accuracy during this period.

From the sixth curriculum (1992-1997), the curriculum was divided into characteristics, aims, contents, methods, and evaluation sections. The curriculum suggested a list of basic vocabulary and sentences for communication from this period. The 7th period (1997-2008) divided the English curriculum from 1st grade in elementary school to 1st grade in high school as the basic education for citizens and 2nd and 3rd grade in high school as selection centered education.

From 2006, the curriculum was revised on demand. From the 2008 curriculum (2008-2011), the curriculum introduced English conversation teachers to teach students speaking English once a week in lower and upper secondary schools. From 2011, the curriculum suggested specific achievement criteria for each grade and 2015 revision focuses on developing creative and competent students.

Currently, Korean students learn English from 3rd grade in elementary schools (Korean Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2015). English is a compulsory subject until a student graduates from high school. Students learn English as a compulsory subject in middle school (lower secondary school). In high school, students have the right to choose either natural sciences or social studies, and students are assigned to classrooms according to their decisions. Some high schools assign more English units to social studies classrooms, but English is a mandatory course for all high school students. In general upper secondary schools, each school plans its yearly teaching schedule and students follow the given courses. Except for second foreign languages and social studies/natural science subjects, students take the same courses.

2.2.2 The English policies in Finland

Before the comprehensive school reform in 1970, students in Finland had to choose their study path at a very young age (Sahlberg 2010). Prior to the reform, there were academic grammar schools and work-oriented schools for compulsory education. Work-oriented schools did not provide any foreign language courses, and this system created inequality within the students, as only a few students reached upper secondary school (Sahlberg, 2010).

The government of Finland introduced the comprehensive school reform, which enabled students to learn foreign languages in basic education. English was introduced as a formal compulsory subject for basic education to Finland in 1970. According to Sahlberg (2010), the reform was based on giving equality, so that citizens could get an education without any limitation of financial or social status. Over 50 years, Finland has revised the national core curriculum five times in 1970, 1985, 1994, 2004, and 2016. At the beginning of English teaching, GTM was commonly used to teach English. In the 1970s, language teaching was based on audiolingual methods and grammatical approach (Tella 2004).

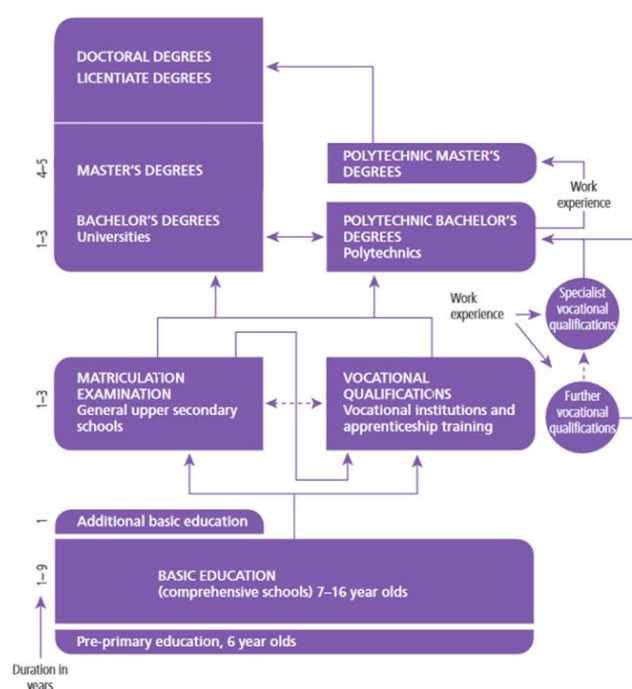


Figure 1. Education in Finland (Finnish National Agency for Education 2011)

After the reform, Finnish comprehensive schools became compulsory basic education in Finland. Students can decide to go to a general upper secondary school, or vocational upper secondary school after completing comprehensive schools. In upper secondary schools, students choose their courses according to their interests; in other words, students do not follow any fixed schedules for completing their education, and students can plan their own courses (Finnish National Agency for Education 2011). The nominal duration of education is three years in high schools. Most students go to general upper secondary schools immediately after completing comprehensive schools. Students can take the matriculation examination to obtain upper secondary diplomas, so they can apply to universities, or polytechnic universities. As there is no limitation of taking several qualifications, many age groups enroll to obtain vocational qualifications after, or before entering a higher education institution. In Finland, bachelor's level and master's level are merged together in universities. Thus, students in Finland usually study 3 years in BA level, and 2 years in MA level if they apply to universities.

Before Finland changed its educational policy in 2020, students usually learned A1 language at the 3rd grade level, but they could take language courses from the 1st grade level if they want to; however, from 2020, students in Finland learn English from the first-grade level as the policy has changed.

A1 language is a mandatory course in Finland. According to Statistics Finland (2010), among 345,615 students, 67% of the students from 1 to 6 grades took English either as a compulsory (A1) or optional (A2) foreign language. If a student's mother tongue is Swedish, the student chooses Finnish as his or her A1 language subject. Students can take optional A2 language in primary school, and B2 language in lower secondary school if they wish to take more language courses. In upper secondary schools, A1 foreign language and the other domestic language are compulsory, and students choose which foreign languages or courses to take depending on their language skills.

2.2.3 The English curriculum in Korean high school

The English curriculum for Korean high school follows the 2015 revised national curriculum (Ministry of education, science and technology, 2015). English is one of the mandatory courses that students need to take during the high school period. Students learn English as their first foreign language, and they choose one of the second foreign languages such as Japanese, Chinese, French, German or others. The English curriculum of Korea consists of fifteen English courses: one basic course, eight general courses and six advanced courses. Basic courses are mandatory, and High schools can choose several English courses among the courses provided by the Korean English curriculum until students graduate, and each high school has the right to choose how to teach English courses (Namgung, 2016).

The Ministry of Education of South Korea published a general curriculum for English, and a special English curriculum for upper secondary schools. The general curriculum for English includes primary school, middle school, and the high school English curriculum, and appendix. Appendix specifies the topics, expressions, vocabulary lists, grammatical expressions which students should learn in their grades, and it also describes the expected capacities of students in specific stages.

The Korean curriculum suggests a separate curriculum for each course in the English subject. For instance, other than the general English courses, the special English courses such as English Conversation, English1, English Reading and Writing, English 2, Practical English, English-speaking Culture, Career English, and Reading British and American Literature have their own subject specific curricula.

The focus of the English courses is to help students to communicate in English, and broaden their intellectual capacity and knowledge, so learners can acquire the ability to deal with various issues actively in this global age (Ministry of education, science and technology, 2015). High school students are expected to understand and use English they have learned in elementary and lower secondary school.

Each English course lasts 50 minutes in Korean high schools, and students have a ten-minute break before another class starts. When students are allocated to one class, the whole class takes the same English course without dividing their proficiency levels. Students use the same materials in one class. Students are evaluated from grade 1 (the highest) to 9 (the lowest), and the grading system during high school follows the relative evaluation system.

2.2.4 The English curriculum in Finnish high school

In Finland, general high schools are generally called upper secondary schools. Finnish upper secondary schools follow the National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools. English is one of the foreign languages in the Finnish national core curriculum, and it is under the foreign languages section (the National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools, 2015. Section 5.5). Students can choose English as their foreign language subject, and English is one of their A1 options. According to the Finnish National Agency for Education (2015), Finnish curriculum is theoretically based on CLT which focuses on developing students' intercultural communication skills. The Finnish core curricula upper secondary education (2015) demonstrates the objectives of instruction are for students to achieve the levels of the Language Proficiency Scale in different syllabi as the table in the curriculum (CEFR 2001).

The Finnish national core curriculum for general upper secondary schools 2015 consists of 294 pages of curriculum and 36 pages of appendix part. As a European country, Finland can refer to CEFR as the evaluation and achievement criteria for learning and teaching English.

Although in theory, English is not a mandatory subject in Finnish curriculum, Statistics of Finland (2015) shows that 99.4% of Finnish students study English at the end of their basic education. In the upper secondary schools, students continue studying their A-languages and B-languages.

Finland follows the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language learning, teaching and assessment. CEFR is linked to the National Core Curriculum for general upper secondary schools, and schools in Finland introduced the scales of CEFR to give instructions for the teachers and principals. Finnish high schools aim for the B2.1 level for the upper secondary school students, and the assessment is divided into four sections: writing, speaking, listening, and reading (Finnish National Agency for Education 2015).

In Finnish upper secondary schools, one class usually lasts about 75 minutes, and students have 15 minutes break. Students take different English courses according to their schedules. Students need to choose A1 and the other domestic foreign language as compulsory courses, and students can take more foreign language courses if they are interested in other languages. Finnish students are evaluated from grade 4 to 10, and grade 4 indicates the student failed the course, and 10 is the highest grade which students can achieve. Finland follows an absolute grading system.

2.3 Previous studies on comparison of the two countries' curricula

There is only a little comparison of Korean and Finnish curricula. Kim (2012) compared the English subject curricula of elementary schools in Korea and Finland. Based on the comparison, the English curriculum in Finland focuses on teaching English according to the individuals' proficiency levels. Kim (2012) mentioned Finnish students have more opportunities to study English than Korean students have. The Finnish curriculum suggests teaching English based on their English levels provides students an opportunity to learn English at their own pace. Kim (2012) demonstrated that the Finnish national curriculum gives autonomy to teachers since the Finnish national curriculum does not specify teaching methods. On the other hand, the Korean curriculum indicates how to instruct language and what methods to use.

Kim (2012) explained the differences between two countries' curricula are that the Finnish curriculum emphasizes the importance of learning other cultures and respect other cultures while the Korean curriculum only focuses on learning communication skills.

Kang (2016) conducted a comparative analysis of the Korean and Finnish high school English curricula. Kang (2016) mentioned that Finland provides the opportunity to learn

English as a member of European countries and sets a goal to communicate in English. Kang (2016) emphasized that the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is beneficial for the Finnish curriculum because the curriculum refers to a reliable resource that is developed by scholars. Also, Kang (2016) mentioned that the achievement criteria in the Korean curriculum is vague while Finland provides the precise criteria which the teachers can use for teaching English in real classroom situations.

Namgung (2016) compared Korean and Finnish English textbooks in a communicative perspective, and the research suggested several differences between the Finnish and Korean textbooks. First, Namgung (2016) suggested that the Korean textbooks give a more explicit presentation of foreign culture compared to the Finnish textbooks. In other words, the Korean textbooks focused on teaching information about a target culture while the Finnish textbooks focused on practicing language skills. Second, Namgung (2016) suggested that the Finnish textbooks provide longer sentences and more words than the Korean textbooks. It implies that students are exposed to various expressions and vocabulary. According to Milton (2010), knowing enough vocabulary leads to a good performance of communication skills, and lacking vocabulary knowledge leads to a poor performance. Third, Namgung (2016) found that while the Korean textbooks focus on learning various grammar rules and language forms in a short time, the Finnish textbooks focus on learning deep and narrow language forms. Namgung (2016) demonstrated the differences between the two textbooks are huge. However, he highlighted that it is important to know the two countries implement different education policies, and English plays a different role in two countries. Namgung (2016) suggested while the two countries have some similarities which made it worthy to compare the two textbooks, some limitations should be considered to understand the differences when comparing the Korean and Finnish textbooks.

2.4 The national level exams of both countries

In this section, the two countries' national-level exams will be described, and it will briefly demonstrate how their national exams are designed. Both countries recognize that students should aim to take the national exams after completing upper secondary education, and the results of the exams are used as one of requirements to apply to higher education institutions.

2.4.1 Suneung (The national scholastic aptitude test) of South Korea

In South Korea, entering a prestigious university is very important in society. To enter those so-called prestigious universities, students need to achieve the best grades in the Suneung, and students also need to get good grades in their high school records as overall performance in high school also affects students' possibility to enter universities.

English is one of the main mandatory subjects for the national scholastic aptitude test in South Korea. In the national scholastic aptitude test (Suneung), students take Korean, English, mathematics, Korean history, and two social/science subjects as mandatory subjects. In English subject, students need to solve 45 questions in 70 minutes, including 17 listening comprehension parts (Korean Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation 2018). According to Namgung (2016), Korean high schools require students to participate in the national standardized mock tests at least four times a year, and the results are used to rank the schools which makes the school principals to form some academic tension in school culture. The national scholastic aptitude test is the main factor to decide which universities students can get in. The grading system in Korea is a relative evaluation, which means a student's score is compared to others' grades and evaluated relatively. Students get grades from 1 to 9, and the top-grade students get 1, and the worst get 9. From 2018 Suneung (November 2017), English subject follows an absolute evaluation, but students still need to get more than 90/100 to get grade 1 in Suneng. Suneung is held annually in November and students take the exam at designated places. Any electronic devices are forbidden during the exam, and the exam is paper based assessment. Students mark their answers on OMR paper, and the answers are graded by computer and some written parts are graded by examiners manually (Korean Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation 2018). As students must obtain overall good grades from the matriculation exam to enter better universities, Korean high schools focus on teaching English to make students familiarize themselves with the national scholastic aptitude test. While teachers and schools have their freedom to teach English based on the national curriculum, they take Suneung into account and utilize external Suneung related materials as well as utilize textbooks.

2.4.2 The matriculation exam of Finland

In the matriculation exam, students need to take at least four subjects, with mother tongue as the only compulsory subject. Three other compulsory tests should be chosen among the tests in the second national language, foreign language, mathematics, and one subject of humanities and natural sciences. One of these three compulsory tests must be of an advanced syllabus level, and students can take one or more additional tests if they want to. According to Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta (the matriculation examination board), the matriculation exam is held biannually, in spring and in autumn. Foreign language exams are arranged at basic syllabus level and advanced syllabus levels, and most of the language exams have two sections: listening comprehension part and written comprehension and production. The written comprehension and production part are divided in three parts, and it can be multiple-choice questions, cloze tests, open questions, summaries, and translation or description assignments. Students also write short essays (35-50 or 50-70 words for intermediate and basic level, and 150-250 words in English for advanced syllabus) in the test. In Finland, the matriculation examination is totally digitized from spring of 2019. Students are not obliged to take any other entrance exam, graduation exam or mock test until they graduate from high school other than the matriculation exam (Aho, 2006). If they wish to enter universities, students may need to take a separate exam that each university requires.

Unlike the aptitude test in Korea, the matriculation exam of Finland is a graduation exam that certifies that one completed his/her upper secondary school education. Students can use the results of the matriculation exam as one of the requirements that universities ask when they apply to universities separately. According to Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta (The Matriculation Examination Board) (2020), the Finnish matriculation exam uses comparability of grades to use the matriculation examination grades reliably and fairly in selecting students for universities and universities of applied sciences. As the exam is held biannually, Finland uses SYK figures to calculate the full-year population to score students without the problems of the unbalanced population test-takers of spring and autumn. The results of the tests are graded according to the comparability grades, and students obtain from highest to lowest, *laudatur*, *eximia cum laude approbatur*, *magna cum laude approbatur*, *cum laude approbatur*, *lubenter approbatur*, *approbatur* and *improbatur* (failed test) (Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta).

2.5 Oral tasks in textbooks

Textbooks offer great opportunities to communicate in foreign language classrooms. Students can enhance their communicative competence through several tasks in textbooks (Larsen-Freeman 2000), and textbooks can encourage students to learn a language through meaningful tasks. In the perspective of CLT, textbooks can be used as a powerful tool for the communicative language classroom if the authentic materials are included in the textbooks (Ko, 2014). As Brown (2007) mentioned, using authentic materials is the key of CLT, and textbooks can give precious opportunities to practice the target language (Larsen-Freeman 2000).

Both countries use textbooks as their main teaching materials. The English textbooks from each country will be analyzed, and the analysis is focused on oral tasks of the Finnish textbooks and the Korean textbooks in English courses. In both countries, schools have freedom to choose their own textbooks.

3. Materials and methods

This section will introduce the curricula and textbooks of both countries and explain the reasons why the textbooks from certain publishers are chosen for this study.

The study focused on using a qualitative method to analyze the collected data from the South Korean and the Finnish curricula and their textbooks. Based on the results, the study will analyze the results of both countries, and compare the data.

3.1 Curricula

First, the study analyzes the South Korean national curriculum for English subjects for upper secondary schools, and the Finnish national core curriculum (NCC) for general upper secondary schools 2015. Finland published the NCC 2015 in 2016, and the thesis referred to the English version of it. The overall aims of the curriculum, common goals, and foreign language sections are included for the analysis. The South Korean curriculum for English subjects for upper secondary schools was published in 2015, and it has been implemented since 2015. The focus of the analysis will be on the Communicative Language Teaching.

3.2 Textbooks

The oral tasks in the English textbook series from South Korea and Finland are analyzed. The study analyzed three textbooks from the same textbook publisher of each country. The chosen textbooks are used for general English courses, which means that the textbooks are not for optional English courses. Both textbook publishers are well-known publishers, and both publishers' textbooks are often chosen to be used as school textbooks.

For the analysis, the number of oral tasks from each textbook is counted for the research. The number of oral tasks in each textbook is as below:

	Number of oral tasks
English	61
English 1	61
English 2	62
On Track 2	38
On Track 3	19
On Track 4	44

Table 2. Number of oral tasks


The gap between the number of oral tasks in the Korean textbooks and the Finnish textbooks is huge, but they are comparable because the research analysis will convert the number of tasks into percentages.

3.2.1 *High School English* by NE Publisher, South Korea

The *English*, *English 1*, and *English 2* textbooks by *NE publisher* are chosen as the textbooks for the English textbooks of South Korea. *NE publisher* is one of popular textbook publishers in South Korea, and *NE publisher's* textbooks are commonly chosen by many schools. *NE publisher* was founded in 1980, and it has grown into a top English textbook brand in Korea. According to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act 29, textbooks should be authorized by the minister of education or the government should have the copyright if the textbooks want to be used at school. *Korea Authorized and Approved Textbook* is an institution where textbooks are assessed and authorized to be qualified as textbooks.

Each lesson consists of five sections: “*Listen & Speak 1*”, “*Listen & Speak 2*”, “*Read*”, “*Write*”, and “*Inside Culture*”. On “*Listen & Speak 1*” and “*Listen & Speak 2*”, students

learn English expressions and the last sections in “*Listen & Speak*” ask students to complete oral tasks in pairs by using given expressions. On “*Inside Culture*” parts, students need to write down their own answers and discuss the answers with their partners.

Special lessons in the *English 1*, and the *English 2* are excluded in the analysis because they are extra lessons. The regular lessons, which are not indicated as special lessons, include enough oral tasks and special lessons are not directly related to topics which the Korean curriculum suggested. The *High School English series* follows specific orders since the same kinds of oral tasks appear on the same section in every lesson. The *English* consists of 8 lessons, the *English 1* has five lessons and one additional special lesson, and the *English 2* also includes five lessons and one additional special lesson. As mentioned on 3.2, special lessons are excluded from the analysis. In the Korean textbooks, oral tasks are indicated with a symbol .

3.2.2 The *On Track Series* by Sanoma Pro, Finland

The *On Track series* by Sanoma Pro is the English textbooks for upper secondary school students in Finland. According to Hahl et al. (2015), Sanoma Pro and Otava are the two major textbook publishers in Finland. Sanoma Pro is also a dominant textbook publisher in Finland and the series is one of the commonly used English textbooks in general upper secondary schools in Finland. Sanoma Pro was founded in 1882, and many schools use textbooks from Sanoma Pro. The *On Track series* consists of 8 textbooks from the *On Track 1* to the *On Track 8*. The difficulty of the textbooks gradually increases, and the *On Track 8* focuses on promoting practice overall English skills.

The *On Track 2, 3*, and *4* will be analyzed in this study. Although the Finnish textbooks are not specifically assigned to certain grades, the *On Track 1* is considered as an introductory textbook, and the *On Track 8* is considered as an advanced level textbook. The *On Track 1* is excluded from the analysis since the textbook is more relevant to the topics in lower secondary schools, and the textbook is more like an introductory textbook, so it does not suit the purpose of this research. For these reasons, the *On Track 1* is excluded from this analysis. Since the *On Track Series* has eight textbooks in total, the study focuses on analyzing the textbooks that are generally used for regular courses. Each textbook includes a “*Grammar on track*” session at the end of the textbook, and the researcher decided to exclude this part because the oral tasks of this part are not focused

on actual interaction or production of speaking. As the oral tasks in “*Grammar on track*” only encourage students to apply grammatical rules and repeat given sentences, it did not fit the aim of the thesis. Therefore, the analysis excluded this part. Each unit includes four topics, and each topic consists of key text, vocabulary and exercises sections. It is not predictable where the oral tasks are included, and the textbooks do not have certain rules for assigning oral tasks. Each topic has different oral tasks and it is quite random where the oral tasks appear. Frequency of oral tasks varies in each topic. Each of the *On Track series* has 4 units, and each unit includes four topics. Unlike the Korean textbooks, the *On Track series* does not have regular oral task sections separately. The *On Track series* indicates oral tasks with a symbol 🗣️.

3.3 Methods

Methods of analysis are explained in this section.

3.3.1 Curriculum-Analysis Procedure

The study compares the two curricula to analyze their differences, and similarities. The study analyzes each curriculum’s overview section, and then compares the results. After analyzing the overview sections, the study analyzes aims, the criteria and contents, and topics. Like the overview section, each section will be analyzed, and then compared. The Korean curriculum for English subjects presents the general overview sections for all the English courses, including aims, criteria, contents, and topics. Among the Korean curriculum for English for the 1st grade to 12th grade, the Korean curriculum for the high school English part is analyzed for this study. The Korean curriculum for high school English is divided into several sections, and the curriculum provides the separate curriculum for each English course. However, this study focuses on the general English curriculum because the course specific curricula focus on subject specific aims such as writing skills, speaking skills, listening skills, or reading skills. Since the study wants to explore the overall communicativeness of the curricula, the study focuses on the general curricula for high school English. The focus of this study is to analyze the communicativeness of the two curricula and compare them. Since the Korean curriculum does not have an official published English version, the researcher translated the Korean curriculum parts for the analysis. The Finnish national core curriculum provides an

official translated English version of the curriculum, so the study uses the English version of the Finnish national core curriculum.

3.3.2 Littlejohn's (1998) analysis sheet

The method used in this study for analyzing oral tasks in English textbooks is the task analysis sheet developed by Andrew Littlejohn (1998). The sheet is used for detailed analysis on the oral tasks of textbooks. According to Salminen (2013, p.17), Littlejohn's analysis sheet gives a clear summary of the basic characteristics of exercises. Salminen (2013) emphasized that the sheet is still applicable to newer teaching materials although the analysis sheet was developed in the late 1990s. As Littlejohn's analysis sheet gives clear guidance to analyze data, the chosen textbooks are analyzed with the modified version of Littlejohn's analysis sheet. The analysis sheet is modified by the researcher to focus on analyzing oral tasks of both textbooks. Original analysis sheet by Littlejohn (1998) included overall language learning analysis including grammar, cognitive skills, and writing skills. However, some tasks such as grammar, writing tasks analysis parts are excluded since the research is about oral tasks in the textbooks. Since Salminen (2013) also analyzed the oral tasks in textbooks, the study also refers to the analysis sheet of Salminen (2013)'s modified version of Littlejohn analysis sheet. The modified analysis sheet is as below:

Textbook	UNIT 1	UNIT 2	UNIT 3	...	Sum	Learner to class					
I. What is the learner expected to do?						Learners with whole class simultaneously					
A. TURN-TAKE						Learners in pairs					
Express oneself without any scripted responses						Learners in groups					
Express oneself by using scripted responses						III With what content?					
Not required						a input to learners					
B. FOCUS						Words/phrases/sentences					
Language system (rules or form)						Text/picture					
Meaning						Nature					
meaning/system relationship						b expected output from learners					
C. OPERATION						Words/phrases/sentences					
Repeat identically						Extended discourse, no script					
Repeat with transformation						Narrowly defined discourse					
Group items into larger unit						interaction					
Extract information from a text/picture						c. source					
Analyze language form						Textbooks					
Apply general knowledge						learners					
Negotiate											
Express opinion											
Translation						IV Task type					
Attend to language style/communication strategy						Discussion					
II Who with?						Dialogue					
						Role-play					
						Word explanation					
						Interview					
						Retelling a text					
						Debate					
						Speech					
						Game					

Table 3. The modified analysis sheet

The analysis sheet consists of four sections and each section has its sub-features.

‘I. What is the learner expected to do?’ section includes ‘A. Turn-take’, ‘B. Focus’, and ‘C. Operation’. This section allows the assessor to analyze how the learner is expected to respond, and what the oral tasks emphasize, and which strategy is the learner expected to use.

Step 4 Talk with your partner about how to be a good family member. 🗣️👂

Example

A: What are you going to do after school?

B: I **am going to** go home and help my sister with her homework.

A: Wow, that’s really nice of you.

B: Well, I’m trying to be a better brother from now on.

Figure 2. An example of a scripted response from *High School English*

On ‘A. Turn-take’, if the oral task asks students questions without any guided responses, it is counted as an ‘express oneself without any scripted responses’. However, if the task provides an example of how to respond, it is checked as an ‘express oneself by using scripted responses.’ **Figure 2** gives an example of a scripted response since the oral task expects students to follow a certain dialogue to express oneself. If students are not required to respond, it is counted as ‘not required’.

‘II. Who with?’ section focuses on analyzing who the learner is expected to interact or share their oral production with. If a student needs to give a speech or presentation to the whole classmates, it is counted as a ‘learner to class’. When students are asked to read or answer simultaneously, it is counted as a ‘learners with whole class simultaneously’. When students are interacting in pairs, it is counted as ‘learners in pairs.’ If students are expected to exchange ideas in a group of at least three students, it is counted as ‘learners in groups.’

‘III. With what content?’ includes ‘a. input to learners’, ‘b. expected output from learners’, and ‘c. source’. This section separates what contents are provided, and what contents are expected from the learner. Also, the section gives opportunities to analyze if the sources are from the learner or from the textbook.

‘IV. Task type’ was not a part of Littlejohn’s (1998) analysis part, but this part is included to analyze the types of oral tasks in the two textbooks. Depending on what tasks students are expected to execute, the study categorizes oral tasks’ task types.

4. Analysis

4.1 The English curricula of South Korea and Finland

In this section, both the Korean and Finnish curricula are analyzed. Although the NCC does not have a separate curriculum for English subjects, the study analyzes both foreign language section’s common objectives, and English subject’s overall curriculum.

4.1.1 The overview section in Korean curriculum

The English curriculum of South Korea emphasizes the importance of English as a global language. English has become an essential language to learn as the society has become more international and multicultural. Due to the changes, English education in public schools should focus on teaching English to communicate with people from various countries, learn others’ cultures and introduce Korean culture to others. The curriculum stresses the importance of utilizing ICT to provide the best environment considering the limitations of the EFL country environment. According to the Korean Ministry of Education (2015), English education in schools should provide a proper environment to teach English by using ICT and enough teaching materials and methods. The curriculum suggests four main overviews of teaching English (General English curriculum of South Korea 2015, p. 3-4):

1. Students can communicate with global citizens in English.
2. Motivate students to learn English autonomously.
3. Students learn about other cultures and introduce our culture to others.
4. As a member of global citizens, students learn how to cooperate, yield, tolerate and interact with others.

4.1.2 The overview section in Finnish curriculum

The national core curriculum of Finland focuses on promoting the students’ multiliteracy in teaching foreign languages. Students gain confidence in learning and using foreign languages and may experience the joy of learning through learning foreign languages.

The national core curriculum of Finland also emphasizes the importance to guide students to utilize digital learning environments (section 3.2 Learning Environments and Methods). According to the overview section, teaching foreign language leads students to:

1. Acquire life-long language-learning skills by recognizing ways of learning languages that are the most suitable for them.
2. The instruction strengthens the students' desire and ability to act in culturally, internationally and linguistically diverse environments and contexts.
3. Students develop their capacity for participation and active involvement in the international world and develop their competences of global citizenship.
4. Language learning and choices strengthen gender equality by encouraging the students to be open-minded and dealing with different topics in a versatile manner.

4.1.3 Comparison

Both curricula emphasize the importance of learning a foreign language to communicate with people around the world. They both emphasize that language-learning not only leads students to learn a language, but also leads students to learn other cultures, and understand them. Also, language-learning is a process to learn one's best way of learning languages. The two curricula expect students to grow their global citizenship by learning foreign languages.

While Finnish curriculum focuses on strengthening one's individual learning ability and multiliteracy, Korean curriculum expects students to learn how to grow as a member of a community, and ultimately expects students to represent Korean culture after learning English.

4.2 The aims of the Korean and Finnish curricula

Both the Korean and Finnish curricula provide their aims of teaching English. This section will focus on analyzing the aims of teaching English in South Korea and Finland and compare them.

4.2.1 The aim of the Korean curriculum

The aim of English subjects in upper high school in South Korea is to improve learners' English skills so that they can communicate in English and grow as global citizens

according to their intellectual capacities. Upper secondary school English focuses on improving learners' English communication skills based on their English skills they have obtained in primary schools and middle schools.

The high school curriculum for English lets students choose their courses according to their demands and career expectations, and it is divided into four parts: common courses, general elective courses, career elective courses and advanced course 1.

The Korean curriculum suggests specific objectives of each level of students. According to the Korean curriculum (2015), upper secondary school should nurture students' abilities to understand general topics in English to deepen and improve learners' English communication skills.

The curriculum expects students to learn English with continuous motivation for learning English, communicate in English about familiar topics, understand information in English and understand Korean and foreign cultures with proper respect for each culture.

4.2.2 The aim of the Finnish curriculum

The national core curriculum of Finland suggests five objectives of teaching foreign languages (Adapted from the national core curriculum for general upper secondary schools 2015, p. 139):

1. Students gain confidence in using foreign languages in diverse situations.
2. Strengthen their proficiency in foreign languages, language awareness, and ability to apply linguistic knowledge across languages.
3. Students are expected to grow as goal-oriented language-learners and expected to apply language-learning strategies.
4. Students learn the features of multi-faceted language proficiency and learn to take action along with the growing language proficiency.
5. One can self-evaluate one's competence and plan for future language-learning for future needs for studies, working, and internationalization.

4.2.3 Comparison

The aim of Korean curriculum overlaps the contents of the overview part, so it is unclear to distinguish the main objectives of Korean curriculum. Finnish curriculum also repeats some contents of the overview part, but Finnish curriculum suggests the objectives of learning foreign languages in detail like above. Compared to the Korean curriculum, the main objectives in the Finnish national curriculum are simplified and short, but the objectives are more specific and student oriented. The objectives in the Finnish curriculum stresses that students should learn linguistic confidence and competence during their studies in foreign languages, and the student's role as planning for the future is more emphasized. The Korean curriculum emphasizes the importance of learning English, but its specific purpose of learning English is not specified in the curriculum which is rather ambiguous to figure out clear objectives of teaching.

4.3 The criteria and contents in two countries

4.3.1 The criteria and contents in Korean curriculum

The Korean curriculum divides English skills in four sections, and the curriculum specifies what skills students need to acquire in high schools. **Table 4** is a summary of the achievement criteria on the general curriculum for upper secondary schools (Ministry of education, science and technology, 2015, p. 9). The Korean curriculum provides the achievement criteria, and the curriculum provides each section's contents, the achievement criteria, teaching, learning methods and evaluation. The curriculum expects students will be able to gradually learn how to express themselves after learning basic sounds, pronunciations, and understanding contexts.

Area	Key concept	General knowledge	Functions
Listening	Understanding, intonation, accent, rhythm, distinguishing, context, vocabulary	Be able to distinguish sound and comprehend given sentences and detailed information	Distinguishing, reasoning, understanding
Speaking	Speaking, conveying intended meaning, exchanging, mimicking	Be able to speak and exchange opinions about objects or people, and express their thoughts	Mimicking, explaining, expressing, applying knowledge
Reading	Spelling, context, detailed information, connotated meaning	Be able to understand the relationship between sound and spelling, understanding vocabulary and sentences, understanding main contents, context and overall meaning	Understanding, reasoning, distinguishing, applying
Writing	Spelling, vocabulary, paragraphs, composition skills	Be able to write a sentence, paragraph or vocabulary. Writing an appropriate essay for the situation.	Distinguishing, applying, expressing, explaining

Table 4. The achievement criteria in the South Korean curriculum

In high school English level, students are expected to communicate after learning all four functions, and the curriculum suggests a separate communicative activity table to practice communication skills. According to the curriculum, the topics should be familiar and interesting for students to motivate students' interest, needs, and cognitive levels. Also, it should be appropriate for interaction, and appropriate for understanding English speaking countries and non-English speaking countries' cultures.

The Korean national curriculum suggests a vocabulary list that students need to learn throughout high school education. According to the difficulty of the vocabulary, the curriculum specifies which vocabulary should be taught in which grades. Korean curriculum is very strict about the contents of learning English, and the curriculum limits the vocabulary of the textbooks. On page 12 in the Korean curriculum, there is a specific number of words for each course and textbooks should not exceed the total number of guided words. For example, general English subject *English* should include 1,800 words, *English1* should include within 2,000, *English2* should include 2,500 words. The Korean curriculum provides a vocabulary list which should be included in those indicated amounts of words, and textbooks should meet this condition to satisfy the requirement of the Korean national curriculum.

4.3.2 The criteria and contents in Finnish curriculum

The national core curriculum for general upper secondary schools of Finland includes English subjects as one of the foreign language subjects in section 5 (Finnish National Agency for Education 2015). The NCC provides language competence goals as a guideline and the NCC provides its own proficiency level assessment criteria for foreign language courses.

Language and syllabus	Interaction skills	Text interpretation skills	Text production skills
English, A	B2.1	B2.1	B2.1
Other languages, A	B1.2	B1.2	B1.2
English, B1	B1.2	B1.2	B1.2
Other languages, B1	B1.1	B1.1	B1.1
English, B2	B1.1	B1.1	B1.1
Other languages, B2	A2.2	A2.2	A2.2
English, B3	B1.1	B1.1	A2.2
Asian and African languages, B3	A2.1	A2.1 (spoken text) A1.3 (written text)	A2.1 (spoken text) A1.3 (written text)
Other languages, B3	A2.1	A2.1	A2.1

Table 5. Language competence goals. Finnish National Agency for Education (2015).

As a European country, Finnish teachers can refer to CEFR as a guideline if they want to, but the curriculum provides a proficiency level assessment table which Finnish teachers can use as a guideline in Finland. It is included in the curriculum, and students can refer to the chart and aim to study for that level, and teachers also use the table to evaluate students. Students can be evaluated from A1.1 level to C.1.1, and students are expected to speak quite fluently (B2.1.) at the end of their studying years if they study English as their A language subject.

The Finnish curriculum stipulates which level students should aim to achieve as given above. However, Finland does not have limitations of vocabulary, and students have different learning processes and courses as students choose their courses according to their levels. The Finnish NCC is flexible since the total number of vocabulary or a specified vocabulary list is not specified, so teachers or publishers can utilize various words and they can expose students to different words. Also, the Finnish NCC provides a more specific proficiency table unlike the Korean curriculum. The Finnish NCC divides students' language skills in three sections: interaction skills, text interpretation skills, text production skills. Each of the sections divides into more specific categories and the table provides specific criteria for each level. Interaction skills are divided into three sections: interacting in different situations, using communication strategies, and cultural appropriateness of communication.

4.3.3 Comparison

For the listening part, the Korean curriculum recommended using familiar and general topics. The topics are related to phone-call or speech, and students need to identify the main purpose of the audio, intention of the speakers and logical relationship.

The Finnish NCC does not suggest specific listening topics. The language proficiency of the Finnish NCC suggests that listening materials should be challenging for students so that students can improve their listening skills.

The Korean curriculum describes that students should know how to pronounce words, but it does not provide any details. The Korean curriculum provides general and familiar topics as reading achievement criteria and the Finnish NCC also does not provide any specific topics. The Korean curriculum suggests writing email or letter as the types of writing tasks, and both countries do not encourage teachers to correct students' errors if the texts are comprehensible.

While the Finnish curriculum does not specify the separate criteria for assessing students' proficiency, the curriculum suggests The Korean curriculum provides the achievement criteria for high school students. However, the criteria itself cannot give a speculative understanding of students' achievement.

4.4 The topics

This section will analyze the topics of English subjects in the Korean curriculum, and the Finnish curriculum.

4.4.1 The topics in the Korean curriculum

The Korean curriculum provides 19 topics which are closely related to learners' interests. English subject suggests nineteen topics, and it starts from a very general and personal topic to common knowledge which students would be able to find what their interests are while they study English. According to Namgung (2016), the topics are selected according to the criteria that the Korean curriculum suggested:

- To motivate students considering their interest, need, cognitive level
- To help understand and use communicative functions
- To consider topics, situations, tasks

- To improve interaction
- To understand cultures of English and non-English speaking countries
- To improve students’ creativity and logical and critical thinking.

1.	Individual lifestyle
2.	Domesticity, food, clothing and shelter
3.	School life and friendship
4.	Social life and interpersonal relationship
5.	Hobbies, entertainment, traveling, health, and sports.
6.	Animals/plants, seasons, weather, and other natural phenomena
7.	Various communication methods in English culture
8.	Lifestyle of different cultures
9.	Linguistic, cultural differences between Korean and other countries
10.	Introducing Korean culture and lifestyle
11.	Etiquette, ethics, cooperation, volunteering, and responsibility
12.	Environmental problems, resources and energy problems, climate changes and preservation of environment
13.	Topics on arts, literature which can expand students’ creativity and imagination.
14.	Population problems, juvenile delinquency, multicultural society, cyber communication ethics, and changing society
15.	Career problems, occupations, labor and other personal welfare
16.	Civic consciousness, human rights, equality, global etiquette and global citizenship
17.	Patriotism, peace, safety, and reunification
18.	Politics, economy, history, geography, mathematics, transportation, communication, universe, marine, exploration and topics on general knowledge
19.	Humanity, social science, art and other academic knowledge

Table 6. Korean topic

According to **Table 6**, the Korean curriculum tries to include topics that cover familiar and interesting topics for students, and the list includes extensive but specific topics. The topics consider the learners’ communicativeness, problem-solving skills, and cognitive levels of the learners.

4.4.2 The topics in Finnish curriculum

The Finnish curriculum suggests a list of topics for foreign languages, and each course suggests a maximum of eight topics. The English syllabus suggests general topics which students can relate to their lives and common knowledge. Compared to the Korean curriculum, the topics are vague, and topics could include various themes. The given topics are more like a brainstorming list, and textbooks can include different contents of topics as the topics do not limit the contents of the topics.

English A syllabus	1. English and my world (ENA1) 2. People and their networks (ENA2) 3. Cultural phenomena (ENA3) 4. Society and the surrounding world (ENA4) 5. Science and the future (ENA5) 6. Study, work, and livelihood (ENA6) --National specialization courses 7. Sustainable way of living (ENA7) 8. Speaking and influence (ENA8)	Foreign languages, B2 syllabus	1. Important things in life 2. Many kinds of life 3. Well-being and care 4. Culture and the media 5. Study, work, and the future 6. Our common globe 7. International activities 8. Speak, write and influence
Foreign languages, B1 syllabus	1. The language and my world 2. Well-being and relationships 3. Culture and the media 4. Our diverse living environments 5. Studying and working --National specialization courses 6. Speak and influence 7. Sustainable way of living	Foreign languages, B3 syllabus	1. Getting to know each other and the new language 2. Travelling in the world 3. Important things in life 4. Many kinds of life 5. Well-being and care 6. Culture and the media 7. Study, work, and the future 8. Our common globe

Table 7. Finnish curriculum English/foreign languages topics

4.4.3 Comparison

While Korean curriculum suggests detailed and specific topics which start from personal life to general knowledge, Finnish curriculum generally provides comprehensive topics. Korean curriculum suggests 19 topics which include social science, natural science, environment, culture, relationships, problems in the world, politics and topics related to our lives. As the curriculum also expects students to develop themselves as creative and international citizens, the topics are chosen to teach general knowledge to students. Also, as the overview and aims of the Korean curriculum suggested, the topics in the Korean curriculum are related to introducing Korean culture to others. In the Finnish topics, the topics are broad and general. The English A and other foreign languages syllabus are quite identical, and it does not include topics related to Finnish culture.

4.5 The analysis on Oral Tasks

In this section, the study analyzes the communicativeness of oral tasks in both countries' textbooks. Both textbooks' oral tasks are analyzed by using the analysis sheet that was explained on the methods section.

4.5.1 I. What is the learner expected to do?

This section analyzes what the oral tasks expect learners to do. This section includes 'turn-take', which analyzes if the learners are expected to provide self-produced responses, scripted, or not required to follow any rules. 'Focus' analyzes if the oral tasks expect the learners to focus on language system, meaning, or meaning/system relationship. 'Operation' analyzes how the learners are expected to carry out the oral tasks.

A. Turn-take

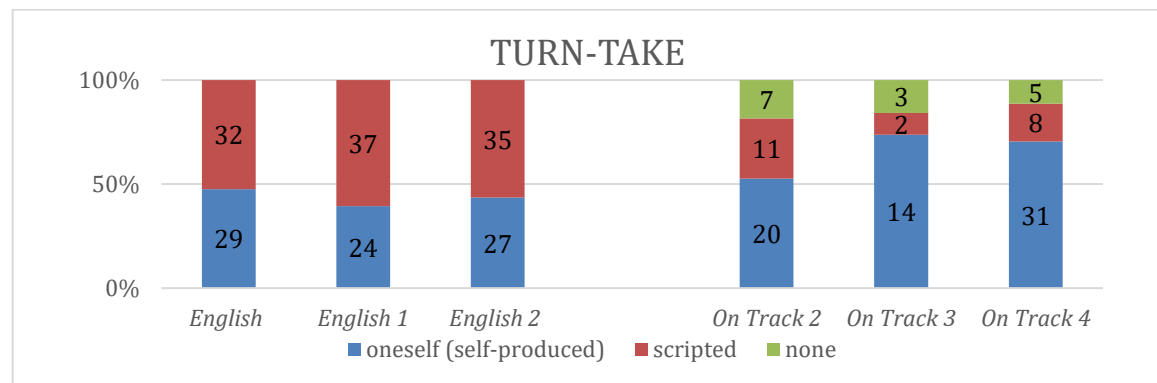


Figure 3. Turn-take

Figure 3 shows that the Korean textbooks provide relatively many scripted responses in the oral tasks. Although some tasks give students opportunities to speak without scripts, the oral tasks in the Korean textbooks contained a relatively high number of scripted responses. Students have opportunities to practice and memorize given ‘scripted responses’, but students do not have many opportunities to produce their own responses. On the other hand, the *On Track series* has a significantly higher number of own responses than the Korean textbooks. On the *On Track series*, students are expected to produce their own answers more than merely to mimic scripted responses, especially when they reach higher levels.

B. Focus

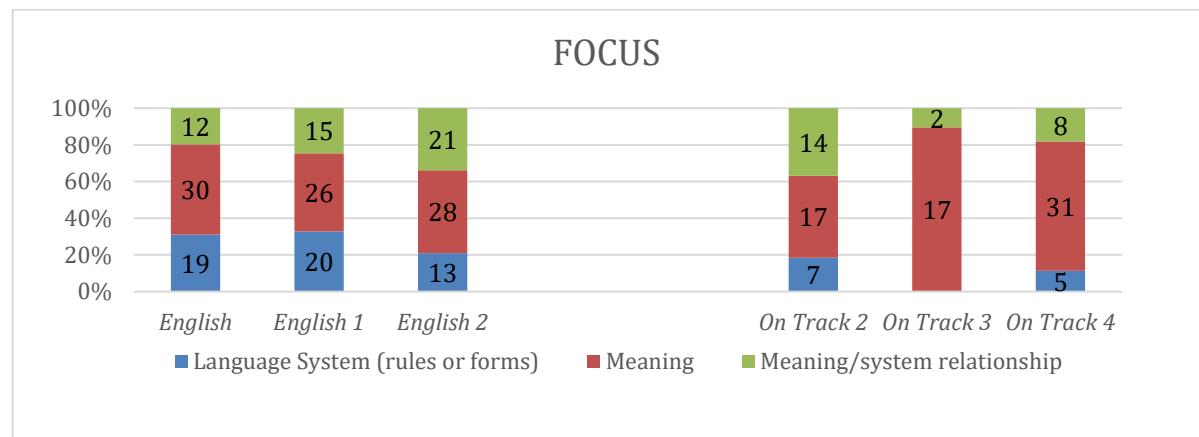


Figure 4. Focus in the textbooks

Figure 4 shows that both textbooks have a significant amount of the ‘focus on meaning’ tasks. Although both the Korean and the Finnish textbooks show that their oral tasks are mainly focused on meaning, they have slightly different results in the ‘focus’ section.

High School English not only focuses on ‘meaning’ oral tasks, but it tries to teach the ‘language systems’ and ‘meaning/system relationship’ at the same time. When the ‘meaning/system relationship’ focused tasks and ‘language system’ focused tasks are aggregated, those two tasks’ frequency exceeds the amount of ‘meaning’ oral tasks.

On the other hand, the *On Track Series* shows that the focus of the series is on ‘meaning’ oral tasks. The *On Track 2* shows that combining the ‘meaning/system relationship’ and ‘language system’ exceeds the amount of ‘meaning’ oral tasks. However, the *On Track 3* and the *On Track 4* have significantly higher numbers of the ‘meaning’ tasks than the combination of the ‘meaning/system relationship’ and ‘language system’ tasks.

While the *High School English* distributed its focus quite evenly to all three categories, most oral tasks of the *On Track Series* are focused on ‘meaning’.

C. Operation

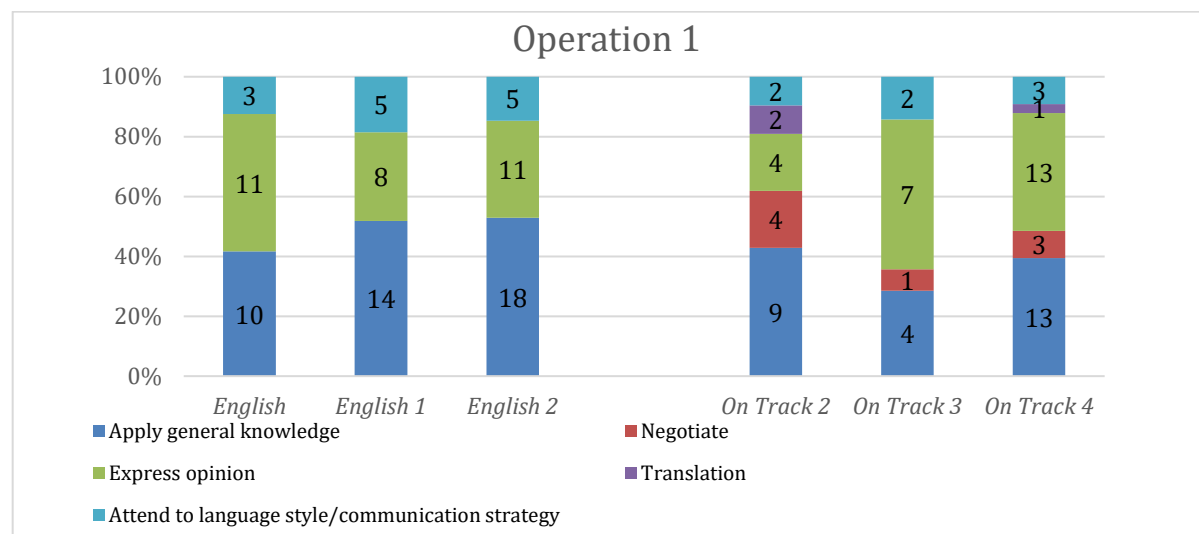


Figure 5. Operation in the textbook 1

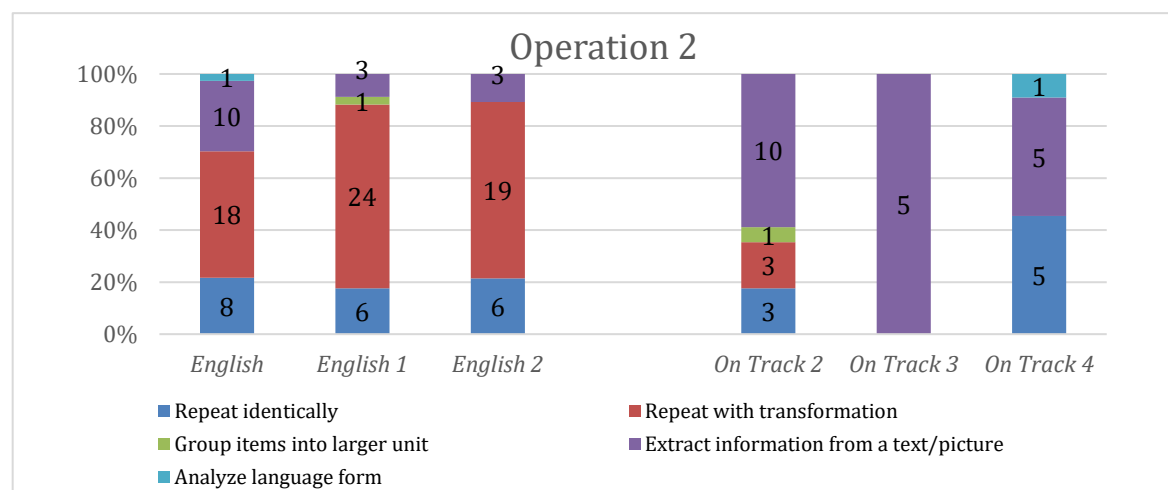


Figure 6. Operation in the textbooks 2

Since the operation section has ten categories, the operation section is divided into two parts. In this section, two textbooks showed contrasting results. While the Korean textbooks have a vast number of instances of the ‘repeat with transformation’, the number of the ‘express opinion’ occurrences gradually increase in the Finnish textbook volumes.

In the Korean textbooks, students are often asked to ‘repeat with transformation’, and the oral tasks provide specific examples that students can use without producing their sentences.

However, the *On Track Series* barely included instances of the ‘repeat with transformation’. Instead, the *On Track Series* expects students to ‘express their own opinions’ and ‘apply general knowledge’. Most oral tasks in the *On Track Series* expect students to produce their sentences on their own. The *On Track 2* contains only 3 tasks that expect students to ‘repeat with transformation’, and the *On Track 3* and *4* do not have ‘repeat with transformation’ oral tasks.

By analyzing the operation part, the research found that the *On Track Series* gradually expects students to come up with their sentences as their English skills are advanced. In the Korean textbooks, the types in operation of the oral tasks do not differ from each other. The only differences among the Korean textbooks are that students are expected to extract information frequently in *English* compared to the other two Korean textbooks.

Both textbooks include oral tasks where students can apply general knowledge. With this result, both textbooks give opportunities to apply and relate their previous knowledge to students’ learning.

4.5.2 II. Who with?

This section looks at what the textbooks say in terms of who the learners interact with. Depending on who the learners interact with, this section categorizes ‘learners to class’, ‘learners in pairs’, ‘learners with whole class simultaneously’, and ‘learners in groups.’

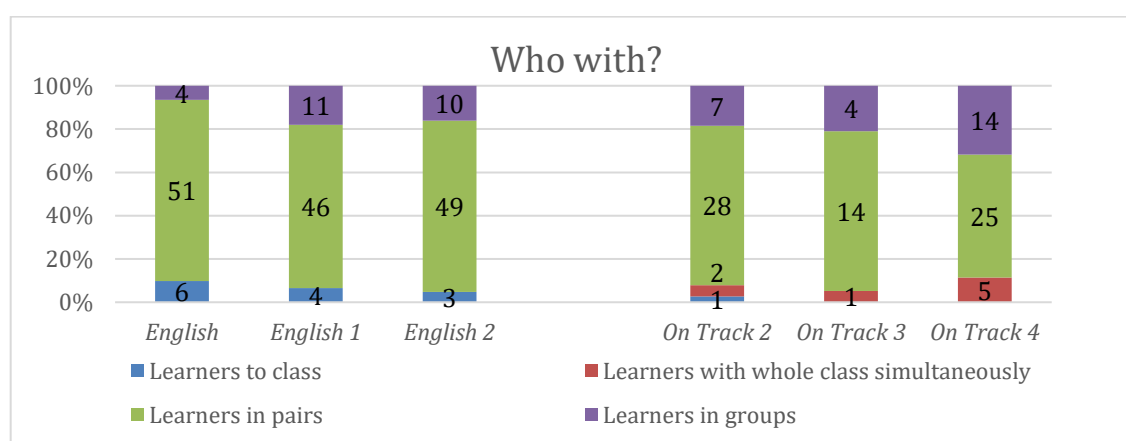


Figure 7. With whom are students expected to interact in the textbooks?

In this section, both series have quite similar results. Both textbooks focus on the ‘learners in pairs’ tasks. One difference is that the Korean textbooks have the ‘learners to

class’ tasks, but they do not include the ‘learners with whole class simultaneously’. On the other hand, in the Finnish textbooks, the results were the opposite from the Korean textbooks because they have the ‘learners with the whole class simultaneously’, but not the ‘learners to class’ tasks. Other than that, the Korean textbooks and the Finnish textbooks have a vast number of the ‘learners in pairs’ tasks in this section. This section is the only section where both textbooks’ oral tasks have almost identical results.

4.5.3 III. With what content?

This section analyzes what inputs the oral tasks give to the learners, and what output the oral tasks expect from the learners. Also, this section analyzes if the learners are expected to use textbooks as their source, or if the learners are expected to bring their own resource.

a. Input to learners

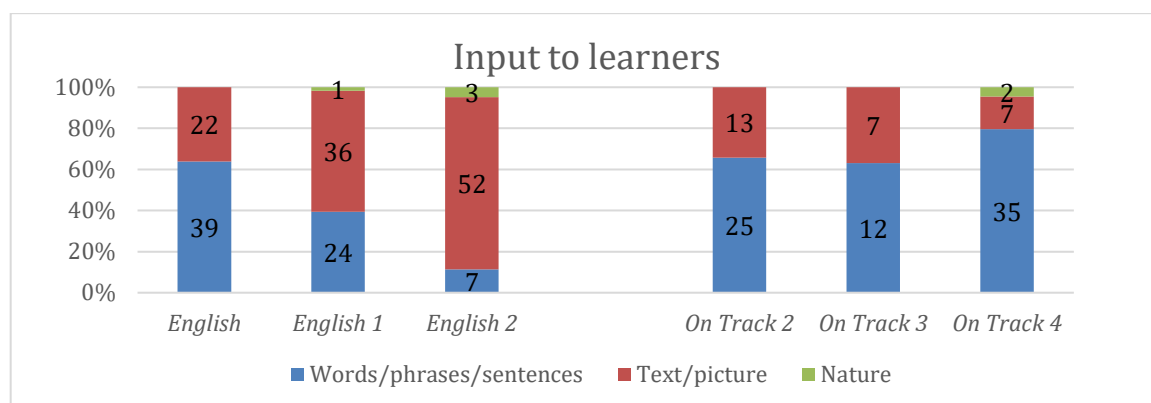


Figure 8. Input to learners in the textbooks

The ‘input to learners’ part has the most contrasting result in this analysis. At the beginning, both textbooks gave more ‘words/phrases/sentences’ input than other input options. However, two textbooks have completely opposite results when the levels of the textbooks get higher.

In the Korean textbooks, oral tasks gradually provide more and more ‘text/picture’ input. According to **Figure 8**, *English* provides more input of the ‘words/phrases/sentences’ than ‘text/picture’, but *English 1* and *English 2* provide more ‘text/picture’ as inputs to learners.

The Finnish textbooks provide the ‘words/phrases/sentences’ as inputs, and the number of ‘words/phrases/sentences’ increases as the difficulty of the textbooks increases.

While the Korean textbooks ask students to refer to texts or pictures as the level of textbooks get higher, the Finnish textbooks offer more words/phrases/sentences than text/picture as the level of textbooks get higher.

b. Expected output from learners

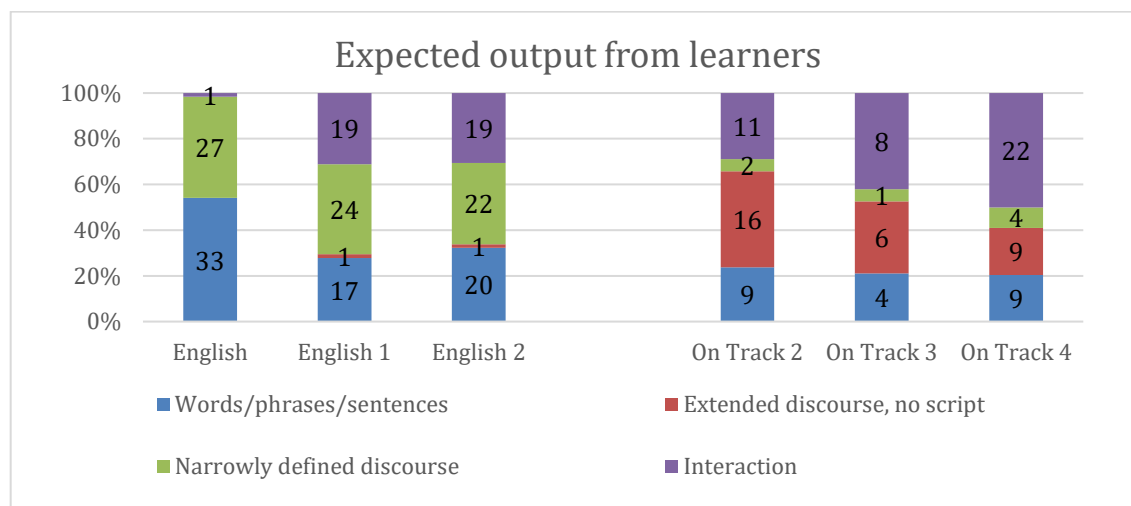


Figure 9. Expected output from learners in the textbooks

The two textbook series have quite opposite results on this section. The differences of the expected output from learners in the textbooks are significant.

In the Korean textbooks, students are encouraged to speak by using ‘narrowly defined discourse’. In *English*, it seldomly encourages students to interact with each other. Later, students are encouraged to have more ‘interaction’ in *English 1* and *English 2*, but ‘narrowly defined discourse’ is still dominant data in **Figure 9**. Although the ‘words/phrases/sentences’ section is not expected as much as how *English* demands, the Korean textbooks rely heavily on the ‘narrowly defined discourse’ and ‘words/phrases/sentences.’

The *On Track Series* has stable changes as the level of the series gets higher. The number of ‘interaction’ and ‘extended discourse, no script’ tasks increases throughout the series. Unlike the Korean textbooks, the *On Track Series* expects students to produce their answers without getting hints from the textbooks.

c. Source

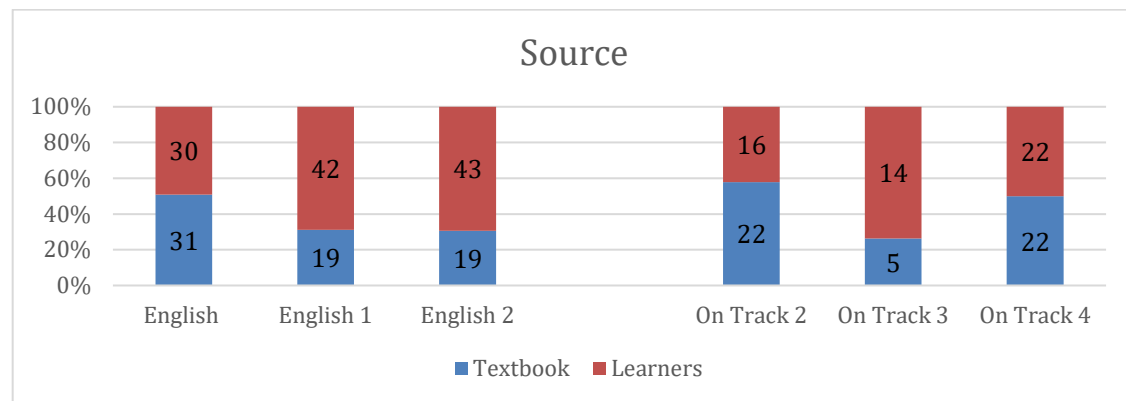


Figure 10. Source in the textbooks

According to **Figure 10**, the Korean textbooks expect learners to use their knowledge to carry out oral tasks. At first, the first textbook *English* provides almost the same number of oral tasks that use the textbook as source. *English 1* and *English 2* heavily focus on making students provide resources by themselves to complete given oral tasks.

The Finnish textbooks do not have certain patterns. The *On Track 2* has slightly more textbook source than students' own source, but the *On Track 3* barely has oral tasks that rely on the textbook source. However, the *On Track 3* has an even amount of source from the textbook and learners.

4.5.4 IV. Task type

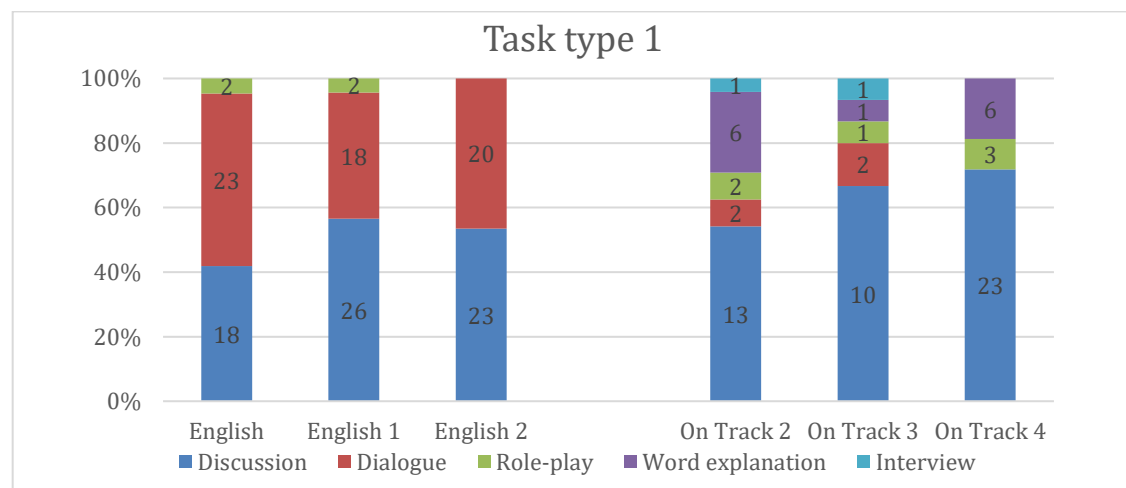


Figure 11. Task type in the textbooks 1

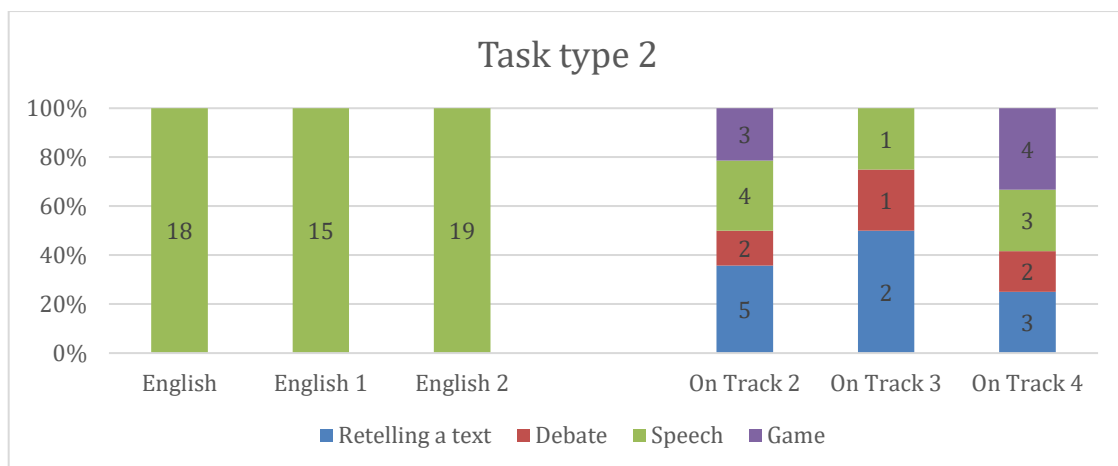


Figure 12. Task type in the textbooks 2

In this section, the task types in the textbooks are categorized and analyzed. It is significant that the Korean textbooks are focused on three task types while the Finnish textbooks have various types in their oral tasks.

According to **Figure 11**, and **Figure 12**, the Korean textbooks have a vast amount of ‘speech’, ‘dialogue’, and ‘discussion’. ‘Role-play’ tasks also appear on *English* and *English 1*, but the amounts are insignificant. Other than those three task types, the Korean textbooks do not include other task types. Thus, the Korean textbooks are lacking a variety of task types.

The Finnish textbooks also include a significant number of oral tasks that are ‘discussion’ task types, but other task types are evenly included. Unlike the Korean textbooks’ oral tasks, the Finnish textbooks include almost all the task types.

5. Discussion

The study focused on comparing the two curricula to identify the similarities and differences of English education in Finland and Korea. The English textbooks' oral tasks were also analyzed to understand the authenticity and practicality of the curricula. While the two countries share some aspects that are similar to each other, English education in the two countries demonstrated how the teaching could vary when the objectives of the curricula are different from each other. Both curricula emphasized the importance of the communicative approach and acknowledged that English is an essential language in the 21st century. The main findings revealed the differences between the Korean and Finnish curricula.

While the Korean curriculum provides overview, aims, achievement standard, topics, the limitation of vocabulary in each course, the Finnish curriculum provides general objectives, the proficiency level, and topics. The Korean curriculum suggests specific contents and even amount of vocabulary. Meanwhile, the Finnish curriculum guides general ideas of teaching foreign languages. The Korean curriculum includes lots of contents, instructions of teaching and learning and objectives, but many parts of the curriculum repeat the same contents while the instructions are quite vague compared to the Finnish curriculum. The Finnish curriculum does not provide any guidance of teaching English, but as the Finnish NCC provides specific goals to achieve in each level, the objectives of learning English are more concrete when compared to the Korean curriculum.

In addition, Finland gives more freedom to teachers, schools, and publishers as the curriculum is used as a general reference, but not strictly limits the usage of vocabulary or topics. In Finland, teachers work autonomously, and the curriculum does not limit the topics or vocabulary in the classrooms. The Korean curriculum suggests the amount of vocabulary that can be used in the textbooks, and it could cause some problems as the textbooks cannot have the freedom to choose vocabulary. As the curriculum limits the vocabulary list and it is strictly forced to the textbook publishers, all the textbooks are standardized. Even though Korean high schools can choose their English textbooks, students are exposed to limited vocabulary that the curriculum provided. While the aim of the Korean curriculum explains that the curriculum considers the cognitive level of learners, it restricts students from the opportunities of learning new words.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) plays an important role in teaching English in Finland. As CEFR provides methods to evaluate students' progress, students and teachers can set their goals to achieve in language learning according to the criteria of CEFR. The Korean curriculum suggests the detailed objectives and achievement criteria as well. However, the Korean curriculum does not provide specific achievement criteria unlike the Finnish curriculum. While CEFR suggests a way to teach English, Finland gives more freedom for teaching English as the curriculum or CEFR merely a guideline how foreign languages should be taught. Thus, CEFR suggests a reliable resource to use while it is not mandatory to use CEFR as a guideline, and its benefits students and teachers in Finland.

6. Conclusions

Since Finland and Korea have different education systems and different policies in English education, it is not possible to draw a conclusion whether Korean or Finnish education works better. Also, the study merely focused on the curricula and oral tasks, so the study cannot explain other factors that affected the results.

The Korean curriculum limits the amount of vocabulary to provide students with the systematic direction for obtaining English vocabulary (Cho, 2014). As the curriculum is carefully planned according to the cognitive levels of students' learning process, Korean students are exposed to a similar vocabulary list during their studies. As the Korean curriculum limits the amount of vocabulary and new vocabulary in each textbook, it is hard to learn new vocabulary in the high school textbooks. Finland does not have the limitation of vocabulary, and the textbooks demonstrated that Finnish students have more opportunities to learn more diverse vocabulary than Korean students.

The Korean entrance exam *Suneung* is directly related to the universities they can apply for, and it gives pressure to Korean high school students. Korean students merely focus on understanding and memorizing knowledge in the textbooks which made the high school education to remain in a distorted state due to its focus on rote learning (Choi & Park 2013). The two countries have similar systems that assess students after the upper secondary schools, but the tension of the exam differs from each other. Finland also values the importance of the matriculation exam, but students have more freedom to choose their subjects, and English is not necessarily their subject for the exam. However,

Korean students must learn English to achieve their goals to enter universities as English is a compulsory subject in Suneung. While the aptitude exams in both countries are important for their educational purposes, South Korea and Finland have different attitudes toward their respective exams.

The analysis on the oral tasks demonstrated the differences between the Korean textbooks and the Finnish textbooks. While the Korean textbooks often expected students to focus on learning correct forms and repeat the given responses, the Finnish textbooks focused on meaning, and expected students to produce their own responses. Although both textbook series had almost identical results on ‘Who with?’ section, the results on other sections were very different from each other.

For this study, the national English curricula of South Korea and Finland, and the two countries’ English textbooks were analyzed to see how the two EFL countries plan their English teaching and compare the differences of the two curricula and oral tasks in the textbooks. The two countries had many things in common and they shared some features in English teaching, but obvious differences existed. Although the two countries emphasize the importance of English as a global language, the education system differs from each other and it is hard to measure how oral tasks are used in real classrooms. Thus, the authentic usage of oral tasks in the classrooms would be an interesting topic for further research. As the study focused on analysis and comparison of the curricula, it would be meaningful to conduct further research on how curriculum affects the directions of teaching English in South Korea and Finland.

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Appendix

I WHAT IS THE LEARNER EXPECTED TO DO?					
A TURN-TAKE					
Initiate					
Scripted Response					
Not required					
B FOCUS ON					
Language system (rules or form)					
Meaning					
Meaning / system relationship					
C MENTAL OPERATION					
Decode Semantic Meaning					
Select Information					
Hypothesize					
Retrieve from LTM					
Repeat Identically					
Apply General Knowledge					
Research					
Express own ideas/information					
II WHO WITH?					
Learner to class					
Learners individually simultaneously					
Learners in pairs or groups					
III WITH WHAT CONTENT?					
A FORM					
a input to learners					
Graphic					
Oral words / phrases / sentences					
Written words / phrases / sentences					
Oral extended discourse					
Written extended discourse					
b expected output from learners					
Oral words / phrases / sentences					
Oral extended discourse					
Written words / phrases / sentences					
Written extended discourse					
B SOURCE					
Materials					
Teacher					
Learner					
C NATURE					
Personal Opinion					
Non-Fiction					
Fiction					
Personal Information					
Metalinguistic Knowledge					
Linguistic items					

Figure 13. Littlejohn (1998). Analysis sheet.